

HIPPOCAMPUS ERECTUS PERRY (1810) (PISCES): PROPOSED
SUPPRESSION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS. Z.N.(S.) 1753

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The common seahorse of the Western Atlantic is listed under the name *Hippocampus hudsonius* De Kay, 1842, in virtually all the ichthyological literature of the last one hundred years. For instance it is the name used in the following ten authoritative works:

1. *New York Fauna and Fishes*, 1842, p. 322
2. *History of the Fishes of Massachusetts*. Storer, 1867, p. 222
3. *Fishes of North and Middle America*. Jordan and Evermann, 1896, *Bull. U.S. nat. Mus.* 47 (1) : 777
4. *Catalogue of the Fishes of New York*. T. Bean, 1903, *Bull. Univ. of the State of N.Y.*: 349-351.
5. *Checklist of Fishes*. *Rep. U.S. Comm. Fish.* 1928 (2) : 244
6. *Review of the Seahorses*. I. Ginsburg, 1937, *Proc. U.S. nat. Mus.* 83, No. 2997 : 551-560
7. *The Pelagic fish eggs and larvae of Block Island Sound*. Merriman, D. and R. C. Sclar, *Bull. Bingham oceanogr. Coll.* 13, 1952 : 180
8. *Sound Production*. Marie Fish, *Copeia* 1953 : 98-99
9. *Fishes of the Gulf of Maine*. Bigelow and Schroeder, 1953, *Fish. Bull. Fish and Wildlife Service* 53 : 315-316
10. *Guide to Marine Fishes*. Perlmutter, 1961 : 340-341.

Recently it has been suggested by Dr. James Böhlke of the Philadelphia Academy of Science that the name *Hippocampus erectus* Perry be revived, a name not used in the primary zoological literature in the preceding period of well over one hundred years. The description given by Perry is so vague and indeterminate that it is applicable to almost any species of seahorse. It contains no counts of meristic characters nor statements on proportions which are the chief diagnostic characters in the genus *Hippocampus*. The plate is an imaginary drawing which again does not contain any diagnostic features. There is no known type specimen. It must be considered an unidentifiable *nomen dubium*.

In order that the stability of nomenclature in the genus *Hippocampus* not be disturbed I herewith request the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *erectus* Perry (1810) (*Arcana; or the Museum of Natural History*: pl. 1, Dec. 1810), as published in the binomen *Hippocampus erectus*, for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy;
- (2) to place the specific name suppressed in (1) above on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology;
- (3) to place the specific name *hudsonius* De Kay, 1842 (*Zoology of New York*, Pt. 4, *Fishes* : 322, pl. 53, fig. 171), as published in the binomen *Hippocampus hudsonius*, on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.